

SENATE BILL 1657

By Bowling

AN ACT relative to the Verify Our Tennessee Elections Act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act is known and may be cited as the "Verify Our Tennessee Elections (VOTE) Act."

SECTION 2.

(a) The secretary of state, in collaboration with the state election commission, shall conduct an investigation into the results of the 2020 general election results in this state. The investigation must focus on the results for President of the United States and for each United States congressional race in this state. In conducting the investigation, the secretary of state shall perform:

(1) A forensic audit of each ballot, including absentee ballots, available for review from the 2020 general election;

(2) A complete canvassing of each ballot, including absentee ballots, for purposes of confirming the vote tallies for each race; and

(3) A thorough review of the chain of custody for ballots, including absentee ballots, ballot boxes, and voting machines and equipment.

(b) For purposes of carrying out this act:

(1) The secretary of state has broad authority to:

(A) Conduct the investigation in the manner most likely to yield accurate and reliable results, including the authority to examine witnesses and subpoena documents and records other than ballots relative to the

investigation that the secretary of state reasonably believes will assist in carrying out the investigation; and

(B) Establish deadlines for purposes of producing ballots, documents, records, machines, equipment, and other information;

(2) Each county election commission and state and local election official shall fully cooperate with the secretary of state and meet each deadline established by the secretary of state for purposes of meeting the requirements of this section; and

(3) If a county election commission or a state or local election official does not timely cooperate with the secretary of state's investigation under this section, upon referral of the matter by the secretary of state, the attorney general and reporter shall seek a writ of mandamus in a court of competent jurisdiction ordering the commission or official to comply with the request of the secretary of state.

(c) The secretary of state shall complete the investigation required under this section no later than December 31, 2022, and shall report the results of the investigation to the governor, the speaker of the senate, and the speaker of the house of representatives no later than January 31, 2023.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.